A CRUSADE TO EXTEND YANKEE CULTURE 1820–1865

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AMONG the "clerical schemes and pompous undertakings of the present day under the pretense of religion" which *The Reformer,* a small, tightly-printed Philadelphia periodical of the early 1820's aimed to expose and "show that they were irreconcilable with the spirit and principle of the Gospel" [1] was a "plot" allegedly being fostered by certain New England religionists, notably the Reverend Lyman Beecher, to fashion the culture of the rising American nation entirely after the Yankee image.

The ire of *The Reformer's* editors had been aroused by a passage in one of Beecher's tracts which in its cultural implications at large appeared to transcend ordinary and justifiable doctrinal controversy:

> The integrity of the Union demands special exertions to produce in the nation a more homogeneous character, and bind us together by firmer bonds.... A remedy must be applied to this vital defect of our national organization. But what shall that remedy be? There can be but one. The consolidation of the State Governments would make a despotism. But the prevalence of pious, intelligent, enterprising ministers through the nation, at the ratio of one for 1000, would establish schools, and academies, and colleges, and habits, and institutions of homogeneous influence. These would produce a sameness of views, and feelings, and interests, which would lay the foundation of our empire upon a rock.[2]

1 Quoted in Albert H. Smythe, *The Philadelphia Magazines and Their Contributors, 1741–1850* (Philadelphia, 1892), 203.

2 *The Reformer,* Philadelphia, I (October, 1820), 236–237. For more extended discussion and exposition of the "design," see also I (November, 1820), 241–258, and Volumes II and III, *passim.* In Volume IV, Theophilus R. Gates was listed as "Proprietor and principal editor."

To Beecher's term "homogeneous influence" the editors of *The Reformer* rejoined:

> These ministers to produce this *homogeneous influence* must, of course, be all of one religious persuasion . . . his own. . . . From such a *homogeneous influence* as *they* might effect, it becomes us to pray from the bottom of our hearts *"good Lord deliver us."* The fate to which it might doom us, we fear, would not be much better than that of Old Spain some time since. Four pious persons, we remember, were once hung at Boston by reason of such *homogeneous influence.*

To argue a large intrinsic importance for this particular bit of controversy is not intended. Worthy of remark, however, is the point that Beecher had with precision designated something which appeared to him to be a weakness in the national cultural structure, and with similar precision had prescribed a remedy in terms of a nation-wide program. Equally interesting is the fact that the editors of *The Reformer* recognized with alarm the far-reaching implications of the suggestion and lavished their wrath upon it. Leaving aside any personal and doctrinal animosities involved, one may profitably call attention to the implications for the development of a national culture, in the words, deeds, and hopes of those fervent Yankee souls who believed with Beecher that theirs was the only culture the rising nation could safely embrace; and to suggest certain other phases of cultural adjustment which derive their character and interest from the vigor of the Yankee thrust.

Whatever reticence Yankees may have felt about discussing the "plan," especially after it had been publicly discussed and challenged, it is still possible to trace with certainty its persistence, through occasional frank pronouncements of those who had the cause in their hearts. Even if evidence for the intervening period were lacking, the flow of uninhibited statements released by the War between the States would demonstrate that the idea of a cultural assimilation of the

West by the Yankees—"a thirty years war," one writer called it[3]—had never been suffered to lapse.

Among the principal motivations of this cultural imperialism one discovers impulses of an evangelical, economic, and political sort; also a persistent consciousness of the need of preventing New England's achievements from being submerged and lost in the disordered process which was giving birth to national institutions and culture—lest, as many must have felt, the "refluent wave" of frontier ignorance, skepticism, and sin rise higher and higher, until "it rolls over the beautiful monuments of Puritan intelligence and piety."[4] Sometimes one, sometimes another motive or combination of motives appeared to be uppermost in the minds of those who urged or applauded the progress of the crusade.

Nor should one forget that perhaps no other age in man's experience ever entertained grander visions of the rewards of efforts directed at self-betterment. A zealot could write:

> Who knows but the millenium sun is just behind the mountains, restraining its impatient course, and drawing in its effulgent rays, until honored and exalted man is fully prepared to bear the brighter glory which is now ready to burst upon his astonished vision.[5]

Under the conviction that America was rushing to a mighty destiny, and that her phenomenal—"almost terribly sublime"—increase in population was God's way of bestowing duty and opportunity, reformers of many sorts believed that the American nation and even the world were so much plastic material to be correctly molded by strong, sanctified hands. "We purify California in the streets of Canton, and the year Nineteen Hundred in the year Eighteen Hundred and Fifty-

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3 *The Home Missionary*, New York, xxxvi (August, 1863), 91.

4 *Home Missionary*, xiii (April, 1841), 266.

5 "Zion's Call," in the *Boston Recorder*, quoted in *The Reformer*, iii (March, 1852), 51.

five," wrote an enthusiast, revealing the scope of his thoughts in time and in earthly space.[6]

Examination of economic arguments in favor of directing the growth of the national *mores* in accordance with a Yankee pattern seems to demonstrate that this line of reasoning was of no slight aggregate importance in maintaining the movement. Such economic arguments represented in general only an elaboration of the familiar principle that Lyman Beecher, for example, had expounded about 1820 in a sermon urging alms-giving in behalf of the poor of New Haven: educate the poor and stop the contagion of vice, else they will "pilfer from you ten times the amount you would need to give to render them useful and happy. . . . Give, then, if thou hast no bowels of compassion, upon principles of covetousness. In self-defense, give a pittance to promote industry and virtue."[7]

Although articles on such a theme as "a stated ministry essential to American prosperity" were not uncommon, not all writers went so directly to the heart of the matter as did the author of a piece entitled "A Thought for Business Men," which appealed to the "city dealer" who frequently had "a large amount of his fortune in the hands of country customers." Since the laws, he pointed out, were altogether inadequate to protect creditors, it was only religious restraints that kept their losses from being much greater than they were. This condition was, moreover, "particularly true in relation to the new states." "Business men, therefore, *owe it to their own interests to aid this enterprise,*" since "the very wealth . . . which adorns our cities, and gives the means of influence to its possessors, they owe, in some measure, to the operation of christian principles diffused through the community by christian teachers."[8]

6 *The New Englander,* New Haven, XIII (May, 1855), 215.

7 Charles Beecher, editor, *The Autobiography and Correspondence . . . of Lyman Beecher* (New York, 1866), I, 348.

8 *Home Missionary,* X (January, 1838), 137–138; and XI (January, 1839), 209–210; see also XI (February, 1839), 225.

A variant argument besought the "opulent merchant" to "give nobly," insisting that it was "Far better . . . to give his money, not to say his prayers, to make the *people good,* where he entrusts millions of property, than to spend it upon bailiffs, to apprehend his runaway creditors, or to collect his debts among a dissolute people, without either responsibility or principle." The Reverend H. B. Hooker, in 1864, acknowledged the solicitude of Massachusetts for her heavy financial commitments in the West as well as for her sons and daughters who had gone thither. Fifty million dollars had gone, mostly from Massachusetts, into western railroads, he said; fifty millions into western lands, manufactures, and loans; and another twenty-five millions into mining. His conclusion was that men shrewd enough to make money were shrewd enough to see that they had better create a good moral atmosphere in the communities where they had made investments. "They know that bonds and stocks and mortgages are all the more valuable for being within the sound of the *church*-going bell." But it is at once evident that Mr. Hooker was only ringing the changes on an old theme. In fact, nothing essential remained to be said on the topic after the Reverend G. Crawford had written from Wisconsin Territory, in 1839: *"The Gospel is the most economical police on earth."* [9]

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9 *Home Missionary,* XII (May, 1839), 10; and XXXVII (August, 1864), 86–87; see also III (June, 1830), 27; and XXIV (September, 1851), 109.

But it would be unjust to accuse the Yankees of parsimony or of expecting the financial balance to be always in their favor. Of arresting interest is the Yankee awareness of the reforming and cultural efficacy of his dollars, a story which ranges from countless petty benevolences to struggling frontier institutions; through carefully wrought inducements to western communities to "match the Yankee dollar" in order to establish women's colleges; to bold proposals to Christianize the nation (indeed the planet, if Britain would only aid), by means of an effort of twenty years' duration. The latter gigantic project, educational and evangelical, was to be supported by the annual proceeds of a ten per cent capital levy on the individual wealth of the nation, the entire venture to be self-liquidating at the end of the period. The ramifications throughout the country of these financial relations, great and small, over two or three generations of time, and an appraisal of their cultural results, offer a rewarding topic for study. *The Reformer,* III (March, 1822), 49–57 (quoting the *Boston Recorder,* January 26, 1822), describes the twenty

Turning now to the spread of the New England way of life, one must await the emotionally supercharged years of the Civil War to hear the diffusion of Yankee culture, faithfully propagated by generations of colonists, teachers, ministers, and enterprisers, most extravagantly praised as a national benefit, especially in its political phase. While there were of necessity differing versions as to how the process had actually operated, one conclusion was held in common by those who expressed opinions: Eastern patriotism and piety had enabled the Union to endure. *"All within that belt is loyal,"* declared the Reverend W. W. Patton, in alluding to the area of missions activity; "All south of it is either openly treasonable, or largely in sympathy with the rebellion." [10] Yet the most pleasing aspect of the Yankee triumph was doubtless the belief that New England's pattern of life had been extended into a "greater New England," a cultural expansion which in addition to giving Western communities shade-trees, colleges, good morals, and temperance had "poured a stream of Puritan theology across the West." New England, in a favorite way of saying it, had at last made good the great sea-to-sea patent of 1620; and the process had harmonized discordant elements, "given character" to States such as Iowa and Kansas, and even bound to the Union "by a telegraphic and moral sympathy" the "chaotic mass" of California's population.[11] Perhaps the Chilean cleric, Melchior Martínez, was correct when years before he referred to the United States as "the Boston republic!" [12]

But it was Henry Ward Beecher who most magnificently proclaimed the political lessons which Yankee Northerners

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years' effort. See also Mae E. Harveson, *Catharine Esther Beecher, Pioneer Educator* (Philadelphia, 1932), 120–121, and D. G. Tewksbury, *The Founding of American Colleges and Universities* (New York, 1932), 9–15.

10 *Home Missionary*, XXXVII (September, 1864), 113; and XXXVI (August, 1863), 91.

11 *Home Missionary*, XXXVI (August, 1863), 85–91.

12 Bernard Moses, *The Intellectual Background of the Revolution in South America* (New York, 1926), 39.

imputed to their own cultural dominance. "It is the Gospel that has saved the West and Northwest to this nation," thundered Beecher the summer of the battle of Gettysburg; he was himself a witness, he declared, that it was Eastern missionaries "who had carried with them Puritan ideas of human rights to the West." It was a fearful duty that God was laying upon the victorious North, he confessed, as he proceeded with words which forecast the psychology of radical reconstruction. That the war was impoverishing the South at the same time the North was engrossing wealth was God's way of preparing the North for the work before it.

> We are to have charge of this continent. The South has been proved, and has been found wanting. She is not worthy to bear rule. She has lost the scepter in the States themselves; and this continent is to be from this time forth governed by Northern men, with Northern ideas, and with a Northern gospel.

"Is this sectional?" No, because Christ was not born all over the world. "There must be a nest somewhere from out of which the bird, the eagle, can fly."

> We hold the vitalizing principles of national life; and the nation is to be given to us because we have the bosom by which to nourish it. As a child feeds at the breast of its mother, so the nation is to feed upon us .... Our diocese will be little less than the whole continent.[13]

That the analysis of certain observers penetrated to a much deeper level than that of alleged political benefits is demonstrated by the reasoning of the Reverend George F. Magoun of Iowa. "When Washington feared Western parties he did not foresee Home Missions," he declared, conventionally enough. But certain of his other observations reveal a conception of social process that would do credit to a theorist of the present century. "Your pioneer evangelism carries

13 *Home Missionary*, XXXVI (September, 1863), 109–112.

nationality along every parallel of latitude," he assured the public. That there were "century-long processes of society and history" which would eventually bind divisive elements into nationality he did not doubt. "But we cannot wait for these. Under the ministry of your missionaries, the thing is often done suddenly, as it were in the twinkling of an eye." Therefore, his reasoning proceeded, "Let missions, like freedom, follow the flag everywhere. The cannon of Fremont and Halleck will set before them many an open door. So, but gently and silently, will the Homestead Bill, the Pacific Railroad . . . set before them many more." [14]

Concerning the exact nature of the "acculturative" process which they believed to have worked so miraculously, one is fortunately not left to mere conjecture. The Reverend H. D. Kitchel, of Detroit, described the "New England zone" as representing "Puritanized Saxon Blood, as pure as that which flows in the veins of Boston," and, taken in its direct and indirect contributions, "by far the most operative and influential, wherever it goes."

> It is the plastic and organizing force. It is not number, but weight, that tells in the formative process of a colonial state. A single family of genuine Puritan substance . . . is a germ, around which a whole flood of miscellaneous population will take form, and serve as nutriment. More than by its numbers, the innate validity of this element molds the rising communities of the West, and unconsciously fashions all after the ideas with which it comes charged.

Even non-Christian New England families were influential; they knew what a school, a church, a town meeting was, "and the subtle presence has a mastery. . . . It works dimly for a time, amid the colonial chaos; but presently, as the social web

[14] *Home Missionary*, XXXV (August, 1862), 87–90. A waggish version of this idea also appears: "Warlike Wit. A farmer in southern Illinois, seeing the cannon at Cairo, remarked that 'Them brass missionaries had converted a heap of folks.'" *Yankee Notions*, X (August, 1861), 229.

turns right side up, the figure appears—it's the New England pattern." [15]

One would expect the individual worker who was closely attached to a great organization to entertain a high sense of the seriousness of his work, as did the one who wrote from Illinois:

> When I look upon the vast and beautiful prairie surrounding our town, and think that in a few years it will be covered with cultivated fields, and inhabited by thousands, I feel a most intense desire that the right kind of moral institutions should grow up with the increasing population.[16]

But it is a little surprising to find that individual teachers from New England, presumably not attached to an organization, entertained a similar feeling as to the high import of their work. Writing from the village of Ontario, Lagrange County, Indiana, a teacher who signed himself "H. V. W." told how several Yankee teachers from various towns in Massachusetts had by chance settled near that Indiana village. Teaching he considered a promising and significant calling, especially since "... you cannot serve your country better than by assisting to lay well (after New England style) the foundations of the institutions of learning that are springing up throughout this western land." [17]

Although the preponderance of materials cited thus far are religious or educational in their bearing, it would doubtless be possible to match them with similar views expressed by men of the world. In a secular idiom, but to the same relentless effect, was the letter of an unnamed layman written from the "Valley of San Joaquin, California Alta," dated October 2, 1848. Recovering from a pang of misgiving at the breathtaking growth of his country, he proceeded:

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15 *Congregational Quarterly*, III, Boston (October, 1861), 341–342.
16 *Home Missionary*, XXXIII (October, 1860), 150.
17 *Boston Cultivator*, Boston, XIV (November 27, 1852), 380.

Yet, why should I regret? Louisiana, Florida, Texas, were once, and but a few years since, the territories of France and Spain. Ultra foreigners in language, birth, race, habits, manners, and religion! but now naturalized, fraternized—incorporated with that all-pervading solvent and amalgam, the universal Yankee nation.... Thus push we the bark of enterprise, adventure, conquest and commerce along, till we are fairly installed on the mountain heights that overlook the broad Pacific. Here am I, a confirmed emigrant, one of the foremost of that pioneer, pilgrim band, that starting from the north Atlantic shore, pursue the setting sun in his course.... This looks to me as the destiny of the Saxon, or Anglo-American race. If they fail to carry it out, it will be from their losing a part of that roving, restless (and if it were not for the alliteration, I would say) resistlessly-reforming principle, that has hitherto impelled them to come in contact with everything, and renovate everything they touched. So operative will be these national characteristics, that California will soon be California no longer. The hordes of emigrants and adventurers, now or soon to be on their way here, will speedily convert this wild, cattle-breeding, lasso-throwing, idle, bigoted, bull-baiting race, into an industrious, shrewd, trafficking, Protestant set of thorough-going Yankees.[18]

Less willing to await the delayed fruits of preaching, teaching, and commerce were certain other Eastern workers in the West whose method might cause them to be classed as community "re-builders." While there must have been Yankees by the hundreds in the West who longed for a regeneration of their communities by the migration thither of congenial and desirable people, certain impatient workers went the length of suggesting in their correspondence the specific

18 *American Agriculturist*, New York, VIII (February, 1849), 58–59. The ministry, too, sometimes spoke in the terms of the world: "As yet the native 'greasers' rule; but a year or two more will put office and power out of their hands. We long for the day. They hate enterprise and ignore public improvements. Our main street even is impassable. It might be a fine drive.... Well, the Lord cut short their day, and give his people dominion!" Reverend J. A. Johnson, Santa Barbara, California, in the *Home Missionary*, XLI (May, 1868), 6.

callings and financial ratings of those who might be induced to migrate from the East. Thus Samuel Merriwether, of Jeffersonville, Indiana, wrote on July 31, 1833, to Absalom Peters in New York City, suggesting that a cabinet maker, "a young Brother in the Lord," might migrate to that town and take over the Sunday School.[19]

More importunate and detailed was the appeal of the Reverend Moses H. Wilder, writing from China, in southern Indiana:

> We want 3 intelligent Pious Farmers who love souls to emigrate and settle among us. One could buy a farm now owned by a Baptist Universalist drin[king?][20] Preacher who is a deadly enemy to everything like improvement price say 500$ Another could in another neighborhood purchase a farm now owned by a *campbelite* and when he moves away their strength is gone in the neighborhood—600$
>
> A third could purchase a valuable farm now owned by the Elder which we have just dismissed to go to *Mr. R's* ch[urch] in Madison and with him Mr. R[ussell] would leave the neighborhood for he would have no one to hold up his hands—price 800$. In each of these places such a man would be able to sustain a Sabbath School . . . and . . . would soon relieve your Society from further aid to us. Can you not send us these men?[21]

To every action there is a reaction. A profitable type of research would be a study of the specific and earthy character of the opposition encountered in the West by the Yankee colonists, ministers, editors, teachers, tradesmen, and enterprisers, and their ideas and ways. For this phase of development was in essence a magnificent struggle or adjustment of cultures. It is unfortunate that much of the story of the actual opposition to Yankees in the West has the unsubstantial quality of folklore. Had their Western opponents been of a more

19 American Home Missionary Society Papers (photostats), Indiana State Library. (This collection of papers is hereafter referred to as "AHMS.")

20 The manuscript is torn at this point.

21 AHMS, February 3, 1834.

literary tradition, the present age would undoubtedly have a better picture of the Yankee plan in action. Even when written evidence of the contest fortunately exists one often suspects that it represents "good" reasons rather than "real" reasons for opposing the Easterners.

Thus, to accept at face value certain resolutions passed by the Indianapolis Presbytery would lead to the erroneous belief that Eastern ministers were finding themselves in difficulties merely because they had failed to join a presbytery before taking up ministerial duties in the West.[22] But study of private correspondence of the time causes the matter to take on a different face, as when the Reverend Eliphalet Kent wrote from Shelbyville, Indiana, "It is a trying time for ministers from the east." A few months later, May 1, 1833, he was again explaining to the New York headquarters the general impression that a few of the brethren of the Presbytery were resolved on the removal of every American Home Missionary Society man from the presbytery—"Is it best for me to remain on the ground?" Six months later still, he reported his resignation, on account of this opposition, from the Shelbyville church.[23]

Similarly harassed was the Reverend Moody Chase of Orleans, in southern Indiana. In his early reports he had criticized his Indiana friends in a "pretty severe" manner, he acknowledged to headquarters, July, 1833; but he still insisted, "They are afraid of the reports of a Presbyterian preacher; especially if he be an *Eastern* man." Thirteen months later

22 AHMS, official copy of resolutions, January 10, 1834.

23 AHMS, Eliphalet Kent, August 1, 1832; May 1, 1833; and November 27, 1833.

The writer is indebted to the American Antiquarian Society for information regarding the four field missionaries named. Kent, born in Dorset, Vermont, was graduated from Williams and studied theology at Auburn. James R. Wheelock, a native of Hanover, New Hampshire, and a graduate of Dartmouth, studied theology privately. Moody Chase, born in Cornish, Maine, was also a Dartmouth man and a graduate of Andover Theological Seminary. John Morrill, born in Warner, New Hampshire, was graduated from Amherst and studied at Andover.

the unhappy Chase, who reckoned Quakers along with infidels and Methodists as standing in his way, was acknowledging partial failure. At Paoli he wrote, "I could not keep a S. School in operation. And some of our people had heard that I was a new-school-man and under the H. M. S. away off to the East *there*. And it seemed to me that it was not best to fish where there were so few fish and they among so many rocks." [24]

In the same state, in his posts at Connersville, Liberty, and Brownstown, the Reverend John Morrill was also having his difficulties. Chief among the partisans who stirred up the trouble, he thought, were those "who learned that [he] was from N. E., & acting on the principle that 'no good can come from thence,' with much apparent kindness warned the good people of this place of their danger." His letter written three months later from Laporte, where he had re-established himself, expressed the hope that in northern Indiana he would not find the same difficulties: "They seem to be more acquainted with N. E. people, & consequently not so afraid of them." [25]

More interesting than any of the foregoing is the case of the Reverend J. R. Wheelock, an Eastern minister who in 1831 settled at Greensburg, in southeastern Indiana, where, he noted, "As many as two thirds of the inhabitants of this country are from Kentucky." He had taken up his work enthusiastically and was "treated, without a single exception, with much kindness and hospitality." In the same early report he mentioned the organizing of a lyceum and the presence of certain exemplary Christians in his congregation as well as "many men of intelligence" in the region. All told, Pastor Wheelock's first estimate of Greensburg was decidedly a favorable one, with the exception of the quality of the public instruction of youth, of which he wrote:

> . . . as it respects the qualifications of teachers, and character of

[24] AHMS, Moody Chase, July 8, 1833, and August 11, 1834.
[25] AHMS, John Morrill, September 18, 1833, and January 20, 1834.

school books and mode of instruction they are far in the rear. In relation to this subject much is to be done. I have, today, given one of our merchants a list of the most approved N. E. school books which he has promised to obtain in Philadelphia. My wife has thought there is no way in which she could do so much good as she might by opening a School of 20 or 30 scholars and introducing those books. This she expects to do soon.

Three months later he described Mrs. Wheelock's school as consisting of forty or fifty scholars; also he mentioned classes of "20 in Olney's Geography" and "3 in Comstock's Nat. Philosophy." "She makes defining a distinct branch of study and this gives her a very favorable opp^{y} of correcting the children & thro' them, the parents of *'a heap'* of Kentuckyisms."

It would be extremely interesting to know how it came about that fifteen months later, everything was in a tangle for the Wheelocks. Perhaps he now regretted having written in an early letter, "Common sense teaches even us Kentuckians that *'a living dog is better than a dead lion.'* " Unremitted effort on the part of certain old-school church members to inflame feeling against "N. E. men & 'N. E. divinity' " had been too successful, Wheelock admitted, as he railed against "this ignorant self righteous Kentucky presbyterianism. . . ." He had not been "a man of war," he insisted; he had merely preached as he had in New England. There is no reason to doubt Wheelock's sincerity in believing that his "New England divinity" had caused the trouble. One suspects, however, that too many children had become aware of being corrected, "& thro' them, the parents, of *'a heap'* of Kentuckyisms." [26]

The foregoing evidence suggests that a precise appraisal of the motives, means, and practical success of this great Yankee crusade is highly desirable, as a prologue to the study of cultural development in the Old Northwest and other

[26] AHMS, J. R. Wheelock, January 31, 1831; May 20, 1831; August 27, 1832; and May 9, 1833.

regions, as well as for the information it would afford concerning pioneering phenomena in general. Much remains to be learned about the various forces which played upon specific communities: for instance, the degree to which easy achievement of cultural dominance meant favorable publicity in the East for such communities; the effect upon the colonizing process of ties of consanguinity; and the degree to which Yankees tended to migrate to communities where Yankees were already numerous. Delay or failure of Yankees to dominate the culture of regions such as "Egypt" in southern Illinois, most of Indiana, and northwestern Ohio should also be studied. It may be suggested that, from a combination of causes, the Yankees found it hard going, and the result was, in part, a sort of publicity that shadowed the repute of these regions.[27] The possible bearing of the cultural crusade upon the coming of the Civil War and the character of Reconstruction policy have been pointed out.

Interesting too is the division of sentiment which prevailed in New England on the matter of emigration. Early in the nineteenth century, spokesmen were pleading earnestly that the bleeding of the region by migration be stanched. "For more reasons than I have time to assign," insisted one advocate, "New England is the place in which to live and to die." [28] Yet others urged migration *en masse* in order to make certain the "New Englandizing" of Western communities. Whether or not mass migrations were ever prevalent enough to please the most zealous, anxiety was felt lest the region pay too heavily for its role of *"seminarium heroum."* But even if the worst were true, sectional decline could have its glories. Said one periodical in summarizing this chronically disturbing topic:

27 For additional observations on this point see the author's "Wet Lands and the Hoosier Stereotype," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXII (June, 1935), 33–48.

28 *New England Farmer*, Boston, T. G. Fessenden, editor, II (January 24, 1824), 203.

New England has declined only because she has been translated. We go back and look in the old nest and find nothing there but shells; on the trees, all through the forests, are the winged ones that rose from the house of straw to fill the whole land with beauty and music. New England has declined—into America. Plymouth Rock is only the doorstep of a house that reaches to the Golden Gate.[29]

Deliberate, calculating, even scientific, the engineers of this cultural movement were perfectly aware of the implications of their words and acts. Often their language attained a poetic level as they spoke of their task as they conceived it—the task of fashioning diverse materials, "like those of the image which was of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay," into the symmetry of one body. One wonders whether any other essay in the propagation of a culture was ever undertaken on a similar scale with a fuller consciousness of the ends to be achieved and the agencies employed, or in a spirit of more militant sincerity.[30]

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[29] *Home Missionary*, XLII (November, 1869), 174, quoting the *Liberal Christian*.

[30] The Unitarians and Transcendentalists in New England also were not only influential but quite aware of their mission and influence, as is clear from utterances in the *Western Messenger* (1835-1841) and in Emerson's letters. See Ralph L. Rusk, editor, *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York, 1939), I, 122 note 78, 185, and 350; III, 118; and V, 200; also the index under "Yankees." The campaign described in this paper, however, was conducted by the Orthodox or Trinitarian branch of New England Congregationalists, who stood aloof alike from the liberals and the idealists. It stemmed not from Cambridge and Concord but from northern and western New England, from Dartmouth, Yale, Amherst, Bowdoin, and Williams rather than Harvard, and its field missionaries were mostly Andover-trained men.